



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/073,766	02/11/2002	William Stephen Aaron	AAR.101	4508

24062 7590 10/21/2003

CAMORIANO & ASSOCIATES
8225 SHELBYVILLE ROAD
LOUISVILLE, KY 40222

EXAMINER

SAM, CHARLES H

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3731

DATE MAILED: 10/21/2003

4

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/073,766

Applicant(s)

AARON, WILLIAM STEPHEN

Examiner

Charles H. Sam

Art Unit

3731

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 February 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 12-16 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 5-8 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 and 9-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C.

121:

- I. Claims 1-11, drawn to a gripper, classified in class 606, subclass 205.
- II. Claims 12-16, drawn to a surgical method for joining together two tissue edges using two pairs of forceps, classified in class 128, subclass 898.

Inventions I and II are related as product and process of use. The inventions can be shown to be distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) the process for using the product as claimed can be practiced with another materially different product or (2) the product as claimed can be used in a materially different process of using that product (MPEP § 806.05(h)). In the instant case the process for using the product as claimed can be practiced with another materially different product such as two separate pairs of forceps.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

During a telephone conversation with Ms. Theresa F. Camoriano on 10/07/03 a provisional election was made without traverse to prosecute the invention of a gripper, claims 1-11. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 12-16 are withdrawn from

Art Unit: 3731

further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 9-11 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Dunn et al. (5,449,374). Dunn discloses a first and second pairs of forceps with each pair including an inner leg and an outer leg, a connection 124 joining the inner legs of said first and second pairs of forceps together, and a spacer 130 spacing the upper ends 126.

Regarding claim 10, Dunn discloses a spacer 130 mounted on the inner legs above the connection 124.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 3731

Claims 1-4 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Castro et al. (5,520,704) in view of Dunn et al. (5,449,374). Castro discloses the invention as claimed except for a space between the upper ends of the inner legs. However, Dunn discloses as shown in Fig. 9 a first pair of gripping members 112 and a second pair of gripping members 118 connecting together at their upper ends by an arched spring 130 and at their middle portion of the gripping members by a hinge 124. It would have been obvious to one having an ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Castro by providing an arched spring so that a user may insert a forefinger.

Regarding claims 1 and 11, Castro discloses the first and second pairs of forceps operating in the same plane.

Regarding claim 2, Dunn discloses a connection 124 and a spacer 130.

Regarding claim 3, Dunn discloses a spacer ring 130.

Regarding claim 4, Dunn discloses a spacer 130.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 5-8 are allowed.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Charles H. Sam whose telephone number is (703) 305-5650. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Milano can be reached on (703) 308-2496. The


Art Unit: 3731

fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703)308-0858.

chs

chs
October 14, 2003


MICHAEL J. MILANO
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700